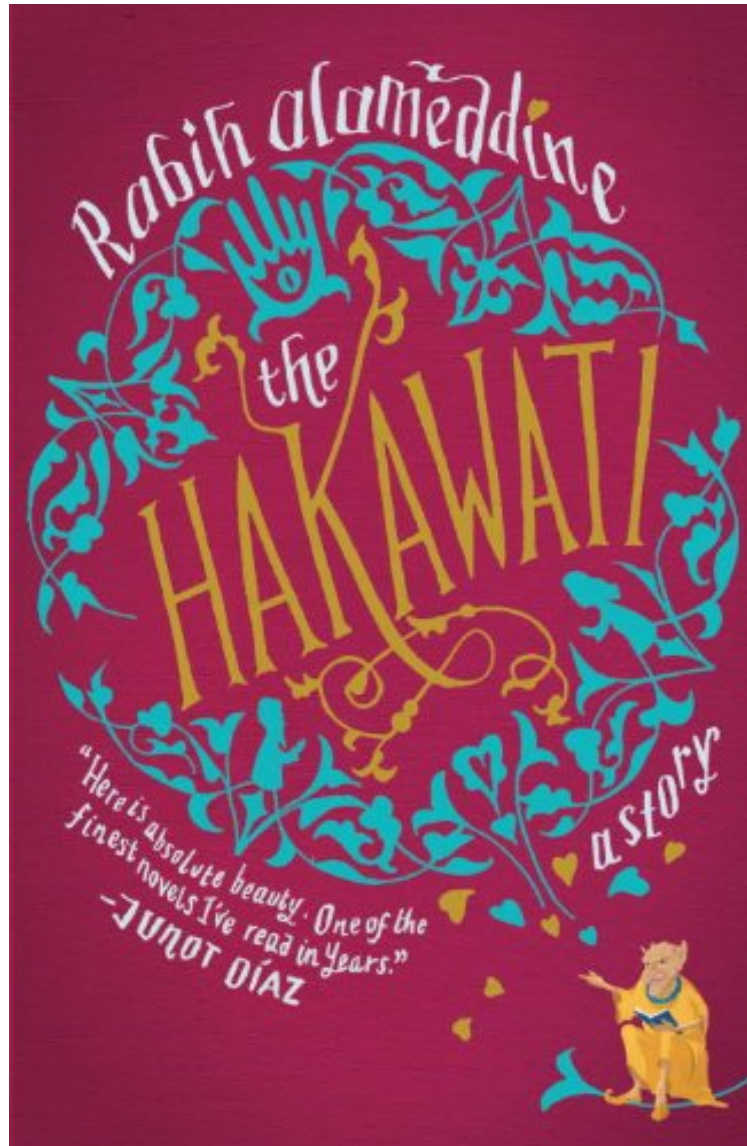


The Hakawati

Von Rabih Alameddine

DOC | *audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

Produktinformation - Verkaufsrang: #334230 in eBooks Veröffentlicht am: 2008-04-15 Erscheinungsdatum: 2008-04-15 File Name: B0017L8N5U | File size: 19.Mb

Von Rabih Alameddine : The Hakawati before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Hakawati:

Kundenrezensionen Hilfreichste Kundenrezensionen 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich.
Amazingly Written Von Rama Shaar This is a wonderful book which will take you on many different journeys in many

different (magical) times with vibrant, life-like characters.

Kurzbeschreibung In 2003, Osama al-Kharrat returns to Beirut after many years in America to stand vigil at his father's deathbed. As the family gathers, stories begin to unfold: Osama's grandfather was a hakawati, or storyteller, and his bewitching tales are interwoven with classic stories of the Middle East. Here are Abraham and Isaac; Ishmael, father of the Arab tribes; the beautiful Fatima; Baybars, the slave prince who vanquished the Crusaders; and a host of mischievous imps. Through Osama, we also enter the world of the contemporary Lebanese men and women whose stories tell a larger, heartbreaking tale of seemingly endless war, conflicted identity, and survival. With *The Hakawati*, Rabih Alameddine has given us an Arabian Nights for this century. From the Trade Paperback edition.

de Guest : Amy Tan I've been a huge fan of Rabih Alameddine's work for many years, beginning with his first novel, *Koolhaas: The Art of War*. Rabih is not only a writer whose work I admire, he is also the writer with whom I have spent the most time talking about books, writers, and literary ideas. He reads the most international fiction of anyone else I know. And for now, his French is better than mine though I'm working on that. . . . Rabih is what I would call a writer of conscience, of self-consciousness, of subconsciousness, of the great big global unconscious. Within his stories are provocative ideas, housed in fractured narratives, splendid images, daring language and simply great storytelling. What some might call disjointed narratives, I think of as the way our perceptions of time and space actually unfurl themselves: not linearly, but in a revelatory sense. In *The Hakawati*, you are often set on a fabulist path, astride a horse, in the echoing halls of an emir's palace, a mythic time and place but suddenly, it feels as if the emir is ringing your own doorbell as you read, asking if he can borrow a bale of hay for his horse. *The Hakawati* is already becoming known by both readers and critics as an important, timely story. In part it's because of the way the book integrates ancient tales from the Middle East into the lives of one unforgettable family. But it is also because of the upheavals--the violence--taking place in Lebanon today. Fiction has always been part of the wake of real political events. People read fiction, it seems to me, to understand the truth. And they will read *The Hakawati* to have a connection to those events--to the turmoil faced by real people not only in Lebanon but all across the Middle East. In fiction you can immerse your imagination in someone else's imagination. You are with characters the writer has imagined, and you are living beside them; they operate as your guides to life. By the end of the book, you love those characters. You have a profound interest in where they live. That's what Rabih has done in *The Hakawati* with Lebanon. It is no longer merely a fictional place, no longer a place you simply read about, or see on television, in the news. Yet *The Hakawati* is not only timely in that sense: it is a timeless novel. In the world of ideas, fabulist tales are the foundations of many religions, including those in the Middle East, be they Jewish, Christian, Sunni, Shiite, Druze. These tales generally start off with the same kings and genies, the same men and women who are cast out to solve a riddle, slay a monster, or bring back proof of paternity or the death of an enemy, or what have you. Then there are "revisionist" versions of the fabulist tales, because no writer can keep his or her hands off a story to make it his or her own. And so throughout the history of religion, these stories have gathered permutations. And these permutations have gathered followers and enemies. But soon a set of fabulist tales becomes the Tales of the True Believers, and religion itself becomes the one reality. Therein lies the source of conflict, and of so much bloody war. In *The Hakawati*, some of the bloody parts resonate in tragic ways, while in others they are amplified, magnified, often in bizarre and even in bizarrely humorous fashion, as if to poke fun at the seriousness in which people treat these details. Interwoven with the historical/fabulist stories in *The Hakawati* are other stories--those about one singular family's past. Invariably, as in any family's stories, there are secrets, scandals, something changed to fit what was best for the family reputation. Intersecting with the lore of the family's background is a narrative of what one man, Osama al-Kharrat, is experiencing now: the imminent death of his father; the reunion of relatives; his own shifting sense of home; the revisiting of relationships misappropriated and unwound--all tied back together in kaleidoscopic ways. And it's not only the stories themselves that Alameddine is after: it's the nature of stories generally: this is what is at the heart of *The Hakawati*. Our own lives are narratives; they don't exist on a single flat plane. They include the influences of myths, fables, reconstructed moral tales. They include the untold stories of our ancestors. They include supposition and hypotheses, bias, and grudge, sentimentality and affection. *The Hakawati* takes these myriad gorgeous threads and reweaves them brilliantly. And did I mention language? Usually, I know I'll like a book from the very first page. I can tell by the language. It shines and hums. It has imagery that makes me see more deeply. The characters say surprising things that are also perfectly true. And within the sentences I find knowledge, deep-seated and intelligent, brimming with an understanding of history, of character, or literature, of humor. From the very first lines of *The Hakawati*: "Listen. Allow me to be your god. Let me take you on a journey beyond imagining. Let me tell you a story," I knew this would be a book like that for me. I could go on and on ... but let me simply add one more thing. I am a good predictor of who will win prizes. And I am predicting major prizes for *The Hakawati*. And for Rabih, I am predicting the biggest of prizes one day. The Nobel in both Literature and Peace. I'm only half-kidding. For that reason alone, you should click and buy not just one copy, but several. If this book wins those prizes, then your edition today will be worth so much more later, especially when your

friends see you had the perspicacity to recognize a good story when you heard one. As I wrote in my endorsement for the novel, "Rabih Alameddine is the hakawati, and in the very near future, everyone will know how to pronounce his name." --Amy Tan .com Guest : Amy Tan Ive been a huge fan of Rabih Alameddine's work for many years, beginning with his first novel, Koolaid: The Art of War. Rabih is not only a writer whose work I admire, he is also the writer with whom I have spent the most time talking about books, writers, and literary ideas. He reads the most international fiction of anyone else I know. And for now, his French is better than minethough Im working on that. . . . Rabih is what I would call a writer of conscience, of self-consciousness, of subconsciouness, of the great big global unconscious. Within his stories are provocative ideas, housed in fractured narratives, splendid images, daring languageand simply great storytelling. What some might call disjointed narratives, I think of as the way our perceptions of time and space actually unfurl themselves: not linearly, but in a revelatory sense. In *The Hakawati*, you are often set on a fabulist path, astride a horse, in the echoing halls of an emirs palace, a mythic time and placebut suddenly, it feels as if the emir is ringing your own doorbell as you read, asking if he can borrow a bale of hay for his horse. *The Hakawati* is already becoming known by both readers and critics as an important, timely story. In part its because of the way the book integrates ancient tales from the Middle East into the lives of one unforgettable family. But it is also because of the upheavals--the violence--taking place in Lebanon today. Fiction has always been part of the wake of real political events. People read fiction, it seems to me, to understand the truth. And they will read *The Hakawati* to have a connection to those events--to the turmoil faced by real people not only in Lebanon but all across the Middle East. In fiction you can immerse your imagination in someone else's imagination. You are with characters the writer has imagined, and you are living beside them; they operate as your guides to life. By the end of the book, you love those characters. You have a profound interest in where they live. That's what Rabih has done in *The Hakawati with Lebanon*. It is no longer merely a fictional place, no longer a place you simply read about, or see on television, in the news. Yet *The Hakawati* is not only timely in that sense: it is a timeless novel. In the world of ideas, fabulist tales are the foundations of many religions, including those in the Middle East, be they Jewish, Christian, Sunni, Shiite, Druze. These tales generally start off with the same kings and genies, the same men and women who are cast out to solve a riddle, slay a monster, or bring back proof of paternity or the death of an enemy, or what have you. Then there are "revisionist" versions of the fabulist tales, because no writer can keep his or her hands off a story to make it his or her own. And so throughout the history of religion, these stories have gathered permutations. And these permutations have gathered followers and enemies. But soon a set of fabulist tales becomes the *Tales of the True Believers*, and religion itself becomes the one reality. Therein lies the source of conflict, and of so much bloody war. In *The Hakawati*, some of the bloody parts resonate in tragic ways, while in others they are amplified, magnified, often in bizarre and even in bizarrely humorous fashion, as if to poke fun at the seriousness in which people treat these details. Interwoven with the historical/fabulist stories in *The Hakawati* are other stories--those about one singular family's past. Invariably, as in any family's stories, there are secrets, scandals, something changed to fit what was best for the family reputation. Intersecting with the lore of the family's background is a narrative of what one man, Osama al-Kharrat, is experiencing now: the imminent death of his father; the reunion of relatives; his own shifting sense of home; the revisiting of relationships misappropriated and unwound--all tied back together in kaleidoscopic ways. And it's not only the stories themselves that Alameddine is after: it's the nature of stories generally: this is what is at the heart of *The Hakawati*. Our own lives are narratives; they dont exist on a single flat plane. They include the influences of myths, fables, reconstructed moral tales. They include the untold stories of our ancestors. They include supposition and hypotheses, bias, and grudge, sentimentality and affection. *The Hakawati* takes these myriad gorgeous threads and reweaves them brilliantly. And did I mention language? Usually, I know I'll like a book from the very first page. I can tell by the language. It shines and hums. It has imagery that makes me see more deeply. The characters say surprising things that are also perfectly true. And within the sentences I find knowledge, deep-seated and intelligent, brimming with an understanding of history, of character, or literature, of humor. From the very first lines of *The Hakawati*: "Listen. Allow me to be your god. Let me take you on a journey beyond imagining. Let me tell you a story," I knew this would be a book like that for me. I could go on and on ... but let me simply add one more thing. I am a good predictor of who will win prizes. And I am predicting major prizes for *The Hakawati*. And for Rabih, I am predicting the biggest of prizes one day. The Nobel in both Literature and Peace. Im only half-kidding. For that reason alone, you should click and buy not just one copy, but several. If this book wins those prizes, then your edition today will be worth so much more later, especially when your friends see you had the perspicacity to recognize a good story when you heard one. As I wrote in my endorsement for the novel, "Rabih Alameddine is the hakawati, and in the very near future, everyone will know how to pronounce his name." --Amy Tan